

# Chapter 14

## SIGNS

### 11-14-1: PURPOSE:

The purpose of this chapter is to promote and protect the public health, welfare and safety by regulating existing and proposed outdoor advertising, outdoor advertising signs and outdoor signs of all types.

- A. It is intended to protect property values
- B. Create a more attractive economic and business climate
- C. Enhance and protect the physical appearance of the community
- D. Preserve the scenic and natural beauty of designated areas
- E. To reduce sign or advertising distraction and obstructions that may contribute to traffic accidents, reduce hazards that may be caused by signs overhanging or projecting over public rights of way
- F. Provide more open space, curb the deterioration of the natural environment and enhance community development.

*(Modified form: City of Bonners Ferry §11-14-1)*

### 11-14-2: RESTRICTIONS:

- A. No sign shall be constructed, installed, structurally altered, enlarged, or relocated except in conformity with the provisions contained herein, and only after a sign permit issued by the City has been secured, if so required. The changing or maintenance of movable parts or components of an approved sign, or permitted nonconforming sign, designed for such changes, or the changing of sign copy, business name, lettering, sign faces, colors, display, graphic matter, and/or the content of any sign copy shall not be deemed a structural alteration. *(City of Kootenai Ord. 201, 20-2)*
- B. For the purpose of this chapter, the word "sign" does not include the flag or emblem of any nation, organization of nations, state, city, religious, fraternal, or civic organization; also, merchandise and pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display, works of art which in no way identify a product, or scoreboards located on athletic fields. *(Mountain Home §9-11-2)*

### 11-14-3: DEFINITIONS:

**AWNING:** A shelter extending from the exterior wall of a building and composed of nonrigid materials except for the supporting framework.

**AWNING SIGN:** Any sign painted on or attached to or supported by an awning.

**BILLBOARD:** An off-premises sign.

**CANOPY:** A freestanding permanent roof-like shelter not attached to or requiring support from an adjacent structure.

**CANOPY SIGN:** Any permanent sign attached to or constructed underneath a canopy. These signs are below a projecting structure which extends over the pedestrian walkway which effectively prevents the wall signs from being visible to the pedestrian walking under the canopy.

**CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN:** A sign or portion thereof on which the copy or symbols change either automatically through electrical or electronic means (for example, time and temperature units) or manually through placement of letters or symbols on a panel mounted in or on a track system.

**CONSTRUCTION SIGN:** A nonpermanent sign identifying the persons, firms or business directly connected with a construction project.

**DIRECTIONAL/INSTITUTIONAL SIGN:** A permanent instructional sign located on private property at or near the public right-of-way, directing or guiding vehicular traffic onto the property and/or toward parking or other identified locations on the property.

**FACADE:** *As defined in §11-1-3.*

**FLAG:** A piece of cloth or fabric, varying in size, shape, color, or design used as a symbol, standard, signal, emblem, or insignia.

**FREESTANDING SIGN:** Any sign which is permanently affixed in or upon the ground, supported by one or more structural members, with air space between the ground and the sign face.

**GOVERNMENT SIGNS:** A sign erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental functions, or required by law, ordinance or other governmental regulation.

**ILLUMINATED SIGN:** Any sign for which an artificial source of light is used in order to make readable the sign's message, including internally and externally lighted signs and reflectorized, glowing or radiating signs.

**MARQUEE:** A permanent roof like shelter extending from part or all of a building face and constructed of some durable material which may or may not project over a public right-of-way.

**MARQUEE SIGN:** Any sign painted on or attached to or supported by a marquee.

**NONCONFORMING SIGN:** A sign which was validly installed under laws or ordinances in effect at the time of its installation, but which is in conflict with the current provisions of this Code.

**OFF-PREMISES SIGN:** *As defined in §11-1-3.*

**ON-PREMISES SIGN:** *As defined in §11-1-3.*

**POLITICAL SIGNS:** Any sign designed for the purpose of supporting or opposing a candidate, proposition or other measure at an election or for any other noncommercial expression not related to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business.

**PROJECTING SIGN:** A sign which projects from and is supported by a wall or parapet of a building with the display surface of the sign in a plane perpendicular to or approximately perpendicular to the wall. Including but not limited to: blade signs, canopy signs, marquee signs, or any other sign that projects away from the building but is not freestanding

**REAL ESTATE SIGN:** Any nonpermanent sign pertaining to the sale, exchange, lease, rental, or availability of land, buildings, condominium and similar units, or apartments. Such signs may include building name and address, price and amenities, identity of seller or broker, and similar information.

**RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTIFICATION SIGN:** A sign at the entrance of a residential neighborhood, subdivision, or multi-family residential complex identifying the neighborhood.

**ROOF SIGN:** Any sign erected upon a roof, parapet, or roof mounted equipment structure and extending above a roof, parapet, or roof-mounted equipment structure of a building or structure.

**SIGN:** As defined in §11-1-3.

**SMALL SIGN:** A freestanding sign not exceeding six (6) square feet in gross sign area and five feet (5') in height, which is not illuminated.

**VEHICLE SIGN:** Any sign permanently or temporarily attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer.

**WALL SIGN:** Any sign attached to or painted on the wall of a building or structure in a plane parallel or approximately parallel to the plane of said wall.

**WAYFINDING SIGN:** Advertises publicly accessible facilities remote from the sign location and provides general descriptions of facilities or commercial areas, but shall not advertise specific business names. These signs may be located on public or private property.

**WINDOW SIGN:** Any sign viewable through and/or affixed in any manner to a window or exterior glass door such that it is intended to be viewable from the exterior (beyond the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the window), including signs located inside a building but visible primarily from the outside of the building.

#### **11-14-4: SIGN STANDARDS BY ZONE:**

##### **A. GENERAL STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL ZONES AND SIGNS**

1. Conformance to Ordinances: Any sign hereafter erected shall conform to provisions of this ordinance, and all other applicable provisions of other City ordinances. (*City of Kootenai Ord. 201 §20-6*)
2. Construction standards
3. Lighting (Could include standards for dimming, prohibit exterior lighting, etc.)
4. Measurement standards
  - a. Determining sign height
    - i. The height of a freestanding sign shall be measure from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground, to the

highest point of the sign. A freestanding sign on a man-made base, including a graded earth mound, shall be measured from the grade of the nearest pavement or top of any pavement curb.

- ii. Clearance for freestanding and projecting signs shall be measured as the smallest vertical distance between finished grade and the lowest point of the sign, including any framework or other embellishments.

*(A Framework for On-Premise Sign Regulations §101.02)*

b. Determining sign area

- i. The surface area of a sign shall be computed as including the entire area within a regular, geometric form or combinations of regular, geometric forms comprising all of the display area of the sign and including all of the elements of the matter displayed. Frames and structural members not being advertising matter shall not be included in computation of surface area. *(City of Bonners Ferry §11-14-4)*
- ii. When two identical sign faces are placed back to back so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and are part of the same sign structure, the sign area shall be computed as the measurement of one of the two faces. *(Modified form: A Framework for On-Premise Sign Regulations §101.01.4)*

## **B. SIGNS AUTHORIZED WITHOUT A SIGN PERMIT**

1. Directional/Institutional Sign: Directional or institutional signs which do not in any way advertise a business. Signage includes but is not limited to: signs identifying publically accessible facilities; signs providing direction, such as parking lot entrance and exit signs; and those of similar nature. *(Modified form: Mountain Home §9-11-2)*
2. Governmental Sign: Governmental signs for the control of traffic or other regulatory purposes, or signs of public service companies indicating danger, which are erected by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of public duty. *(Mountain Home §9-11-2)*
3. Addressing numbers/mailboxes
4. Flagpole that do not exceed a height of 35-feet. *(Note: What is reasonable to require a structural permit for the pole)*
5. ~~Warning signs, meeting the size requirements of small signs: Such as No Trespassing or Beware of Dog~~
  - a. ~~Maximum number~~
  - b. ~~Maximum size~~
6. Plaques/Name Plates
7. Small signs:
  - a. No small sign may be located on or within any public right-of-way, unless it meets the definition of a "government sign" as defined within this chapter.
  - b. Small signs shall not include any sign that is over 6 square feet in area or 5-feet in height at any point along the existing grade.
  - c. Small signs shall not be illuminated or contain reader boards.
8. Wayfinding signs
9. Wall or Window signs
  - a. *Advertising onsite commercial activities only?*

## **C. PROHIBITED SIGNS**

1. Signs which obstruct or interfere with traffic: Signs located in such a manner as to obstruct or otherwise interfere with an official traffic sign, signal or device, or obstruct

or interfere with a driver's view of approaching, merging or intersecting traffic. (*City of Kootenai Ord. 201 §20-6*)

2. Signs which simulate traffic control devices
3. Flashing signs
4. Signs on public property, unless it meets the definition of a government sign.
5. ~~Vehicle mounted signs (Do we want to allow these? Maybe move this to "Standards Applicable to All Zones" if so?)~~

#### **D. RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT** (standards for discussion)

1. Number of signs
2. Personal nameplates
  - a. Maximum sign area
3. Residential neighborhood identification signs
  - a. Maximum sign area
  - b. Maximum sign height
4. Church, school, public buildings
5. Setbacks

#### **E. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS** (standards for discussion)

1. On-premise freestanding signs
  - a. Maximum number of signs (could depend upon linear feet of public street frontage, allow a certain number per business, etc.)
  - b. Maximum sign area
  - c. Maximum sign height
2. Off-premise freestanding signs
  - a. Maximum number of signs
  - b. Maximum sign area
  - c. Maximum sign height
  - d. Minimum spacing between signs
3. Rooftop signs (see handout)
  - a. Maximum number
  - b. Maximum sign projection
  - c. Maximum sign area
  - d. Maximum sign height
4. Projecting sign – to include blade signs, canopy signs, marquee signs, or any other sign that projects away from the building but is not freestanding
  - a. Maximum sign area
  - b. Maximum projection from wall
  - c. Minimum spacing between signs
5. Wall signs
  - a. Maximum sign area
  - b. Maximum number of signs
  - c. Minimum spacing between signs
6. Setbacks

#### **F. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT** (standards for discussion)

1. On-premise freestanding signs
  - a. Maximum number of signs (could depend upon linear feet of public street frontage, allow a certain number per business, etc.)
  - b. Maximum sign area

- c. Maximum sign height
- 2. Off-premise freestanding signs
  - a. Maximum number of signs
  - b. Maximum sign area
  - c. Maximum sign height
  - d. Minimum spacing between signs
- 3. Rooftop signs (see handout)
  - a. Maximum number
  - b. Maximum sign projection
  - c. Maximum sign area
  - d. Maximum sign height
- 4. Projecting sign – to include blade signs, canopy signs, marquee signs, or any other sign that projects away from the building but is not freestanding
  - a. Maximum sign area
  - b. Maximum projection from wall
  - c. Minimum spacing between signs
  - d. Minimum clearance from sidewalk
- 5. Wall signs
  - a. Maximum sign area
  - b. Maximum number of signs
  - c. Minimum space between signs
- 6. Over the road banners (??- is it worth regulating)
- 7. Setbacks

## **G. MEDICAL DISTRICT**

Does this zone need its own standards?

### **11-14-6: NON-CONFORMING SIGNS:** (Standards for discussion with sample language)

- Ex. 1.** No such nonconforming sign may be enlarged or altered, in a way which increases its nonconformity, but any sign may be altered to bring it into conformity. (*City of McCall 3.9.06.A.1*) (Lisa favors this one)
- Ex. 2.** Any nonconforming signs in [commercial and industrial districts] may remain with normal maintenance. An existing nonconforming sign shall be maintained in good structural condition or shall be removed or replaced with the same size or smaller sign. (*City of Mountain Home 9-11-10*)
- Ex. 3.** The legal nonconforming sign is subject to all requirements of this chapter regarding safety, maintenance, and repair. If, however, the sign suffers damage or deterioration in excess of fifty percent (50%) of its replacement value, it must be brought into compliance with this chapter. (*City of Kootenai Ord. 201 §20-7-G-3*)

### **11-14-7: ADMINISTRATION:** (Purposely incomplete – to be finished at later date)

- A. Permit Required: A permit shall be required for all signs, except those expressly authorized without a permit. Exemption from permit shall not, however, exempt the

owner of the sign from responsibility for its erection and maintenance in a safe manner, and in a manner in accordance with all other provisions of this chapter. (*City of Kootenai Ord. 201 §20-9-A*)

- B. Alteration, Enlargement, Or Relocation Of Signs: No sign shall be structurally altered, enlarged, or relocated except in conformity to the provisions herein, and only upon applying for and securing a permit, unless expressly authorized without a permit.
- C. Fees: generally set by city council and payable at time of application
- D. Sign application will include: consent of property owner (Kootenai requires a signed letter if applicant is not property owner,) location and dimension of all existing and proposed signs on lot; graphic depictions of proposed sign including design and dimensions.
- E. Standards for Sign Permit Approval: Permit application shall be approved by the city if all of the following standards have been met:
  - 1. The sign, as proposed, meets all applicable requirements of this chapter;
  - 2. The sign, as proposed, meets all applicable requirements of the city's adopted building and applicable electrical codes;
  - 3. The sign, as proposed, does not violate any other applicable chapters or standards of the city, state and federal government.(*Modified form: City of Kootenai Ord. 201 §20-9-A*)
- F. Appeals – (TBD)